

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

In the Matter of HEIDI S. GUILLE and U.S. POSTAL SERVICE,
POST OFFICE, Antigo, WI

*Docket No. 02-605; Submitted on the Record;
Issued July 11, 2002*

DECISION and ORDER

Before MICHAEL J. WALSH, ALEC J. KOROMILAS,
A. PETER KANJORSKI

The issue is whether appellant sustained an emotional condition while in the performance of duty.

On January 9, 2001 appellant, then a 34-year-old part-time flexible clerk, filed an occupational disease claim asserting that her stress was a result of her federal employment. She offered no explanation other than the following: "Stress related."

On March 1, 2001 the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs requested that appellant submit information to support her claim, including a detailed description of the employment factors to which she attributed her condition and a comprehensive medical report explaining how these employment factors contributed to her diagnosis. The Office advised appellant to submit this information within a reasonable period, approximately 30 days.

In a decision dated September 18, 2001, the Office denied appellant's claim because she submitted no information and failed to identify any factor of employment as the cause of her condition.

The Board finds that appellant has failed to meet her burden of proof to establish that she sustained an emotional condition while in the performance of duty.

The claimant has the burden of establishing by the weight of the reliable, probative and substantial evidence that her condition was caused or adversely affected by her employment.¹ This burden includes the submission of a detailed description of the employment factors that she believes caused or adversely affected the condition for which she claims compensation.² The

¹ *Pamela R. Rice*, 38 ECAB 838, 841 (1987).

² *Walter D. Morehead*, 31 ECAB 188, 194 (1979) (one of the essential elements of a claim is that the claimant specify factors of his employment that he believes have caused an injury, such as an emotional or hypertensive condition).

claimant's burden of proof is not discharged by the fact that she has identified employment factors that may give rise to a compensable disability. She must also submit a well-reasoned medical opinion establishing that she has an emotional or psychological disorder and that such disorder is causally related to the identified compensable employment factors.³

The Office advised appellant of the information needed to support her claim and provided her ample opportunity to submit such information. Because she failed to submit evidence to support the essential elements of her claim, including a description of employment factors to which she attributed her condition⁴ and a medical opinion supporting causal relationship, the Board finds that she has failed to make a *prima facie* claim for compensation.⁵

The September 18, 2001 decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs is affirmed.

Dated, Washington, DC
July 11, 2002

Michael J. Walsh
Chairman

Alec J. Koromilas
Member

A. Peter Kanjorski
Alternate Member

³ *William P. George*, 43 ECAB 1159, 1168 (1992).

⁴ The Board's jurisdiction is limited to reviewing the evidence that was before the Office at the time of its final decision. 20 C.F.R. § 501.2(c). The Board has no jurisdiction, therefore, to review the October 3, 2001 statement of employment factors that appellant submitted on appeal.

⁵ *See Herman E. Harris*, Docket No. 91-1754 (issued April 29, 1992) (finding that the claimant failed to establish a *prima facie* claim for compensation where he submitted no medical opinion relating his occupational disease or condition to factors of his federal employment).